

Maige Cagosa

THE POLITICS AT GOD'S FUNERAL

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As I read The Politics at God's Funeral, after having read Sam Keen's book, another book of Sam Keen's (with Jim Fowler) kept coming to mind, and some of the structure for this paper will be drawn from that book. Life Maps, Keen's study of moral development, seems to provide a key for what Harrington is talking about. Keen and Fowler describe Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan's six stages of moral development (based, by the way, on the work of Jean Piaget in logical and cognitive development); stages which are sequential, hierarchical, invariant and universal. These six characteristic stages are:

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| 1. Heteronomous Morality - | To avoid breaking rules backed by punishment, obedience for its own sake, and avoiding physical damage to persons and property. |
| 2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange | Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interest and needs and letting others do the same. Right is what's fair, what's an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement. |
| 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships and Interpersonal Conformity | Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in your role as son/daughter, brother/sister, friend, etc. |

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3. (continued)

"Being good" is important and means having good motives, showing concern about others. It also means keeping mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect and gratitude.

4. Social System and Conscience

Fulfilling the actual duties to which you have agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties. Right is also contributing to society, the group, or institution.

5. Social Contract or Utility

Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to your group. These relative rules should usually be upheld, however, in the interest of impartiality and because they are the social contract. Some nonrelative values and rights like life and liberty, however, must be upheld in any society and regardless of majority opinion.

6. Universal Ethical Principles

Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice: the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Given this framework, how does the death of the societal God which Harrington delineates fit into this framework?

Harrington defines the God who is dead or dying as the God who has been used politically for the following:

1. the legitimization of established power and sometimes revolt against it;
2. the transcendent symbol of the common consciousness of an existing community;
3. the foundation of all other values;
4. the organizing principle of a system of the authoritative allocation of social roles (the God of Western feudalism) or the motivating and ethical principle of a system of individual mobility (the God of Western capitalism);
5. The guarantor of personal, ethnic, and national identity;
6. A philosopher for the non-philosophers, including the illiterate. (p.7)

If one looks carefully at Kohlberg's stages, as they are delineated by Keen and Fowler, an interesting layering out occurs with the historical claims to the death of God.

STAGE I. Heteronomous Morality.

Beginning with a description of the feudal world which existed, rigid, parochial, and hierarchical, Harrington quotes Aquinas, "As God created the world, and placed everything in its proper place and brought forth such order that the world appears as a harmonious whole, so too must the founders of states assign each member his proper place, and so order things that an organic, unified state articulated in itself emerges." (p.109) Under feudalism work was authoritatively allocated to individuals and classes, each group was confined to its traditional way of working and rewarded on a scale determined by the community, private property was conditioned on the performance of social function, there was no market in land and the serf was tied, once and for all, to one occupation. (p. 110)

Harrington begins with the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment and describes it as a cause of a revolution which occurred predating the Industrial Revolution. It was for Harrington, social (the emergence of a class of "free" laborers and of a bourgeoisie), cultural (the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution of which it was a part), economic in a nontechnical sense (the social organization in a traditional technology), and technological (the Industrial Revolution). (p.13) The philosophical master of the time, to Harrington, was Kant, and he describes Kant's effect upon the times. He says, "Humans were now creating reality for themselves instead of accepting it as a given from God, and the laws within the mind were being imposed upon the external world." (p.14) Further, to quote Harrington again, "Kant rigorously and profoundly theorized a commonplace of the modern age: the war between "is" and "ought"." Science, he

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...even if they do not make men ethically better, do make them more cultured, conquer the sensual drives and thereby prepare men for a domination in which reason alone shall have power. While the evil which afflicts us, in part because of nature and in part because of man's incessant egotism, is still there, at the same time the powers of the soul rise up, increase and become stronger, so as not to be subordinated to those natural drives and allow us to feel equal to the higher ends which lie hidden within us. (p.23)

Based on Kohlberg's levels of morality, what Kant essentially is saying is that humanity is ready for a new level of morality. The first level, the level at which humanity was in thrall to kings and princes, to nobles who had power over them, and who exacted obedience in direct response to the amount of punishment ("Off with their heads!") effected, was at an end with the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, and with the techno-

logical rise of Science and its sister muse History. Humanity no longer was at the base level of morality where it "avoided breaking rules backed by punishment, was obedient for its own sake, and was merely avoiding physical damage to persons and property" as a proper level of civilization. God, who had kept all in order through the hierarchical "divine right of Kings," was no longer able to do so in this manner. "Religion was a despicable means of duping the mob into accepting irrational tyrannies, and a necessary means of keeping people content under rational, benevolent authority." Religion, to Napoleon, for example, makes tolerable the intolerable. (p.25) Unfortunately, the Enlightenment did not go far enough. Its problem was, and I quote Harrington, "was a genuine appeal to universal values but committed to a particular, class-dominated social order;...it was apologetic, ideological, because it also despised the mob and looked for consoling myths with which to keep it quiet... but ... the people turned out to be much more intelligent than...suspected. This led to a crisis of the legitimacy of the established authority. (p.30) God, decided Kant, was dead. The masses, however, were ready for a new step up the ladder of morality.

STAGE 2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange

One would not have to go far to look for a better definition of Capitalism than the above definition of the second stage of moral development.

"With the rise of capitalism, the traditional society which was both cause and effect of the Judeo-Christian God began to disintegrate. "External security and movement," Karl Marx wrote, "distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all previous periods of history. The holy shudder of pious ecstasy...had been drowned in the ice-cold water of egotistical calculation...All fixed and deeply rooted relations, with their venerable images and world views, were dissolved." (p.58)

Hegel is the master philosopher of the early capitalist era, and we have Harrington's word for Hegel.

"He was a German, living in the 'anarchy' of a fragmented, largely fictional, empire: he experienced the capitalist division of labor, with its degradation of the work process, vicariously...but it made a deep impression on him even in economically backward Germany; and he saw, and feared, the rise of a new social strata, a 'mob' without a sense of its own proper place and dignity." (p.59)

Hegel was looking for a religion which would appeal to the heart as well as to the head, and rejected Luther as having abolished Catholic authoritarianism only to replace it with his own ideological authoritarianism. Hegel believed that religion was political. "The popular feasts of the Greeks were all religious feasts to honor either a god or a man who had served the state well and therefore became godly...Religion is the place where the people defines itself...From this point of view religion is the closest of relationships with the state." And Capitalism and the State, with the help of John Calvin, became partners and made a deal, in the best tradition of level 2, where the workers would work and the barons would profit. Hegel, unfortunately, based much of what he wrote on the idea that ancient Greece and Rome was a place where there was no split between freedom and authority, subjective and objective, and the "free republican" of ancient Greece or Rome was so at one with his society that he gave his life without question. Hegel, says Harrington, was either excessively pragmatic or excessively utopian. Ultimately, he defined religion ... as the faith of capitalist society. It is the glory of Protestantism...that it honors marriage rather than celibacy, work as against charity, rational obedience as against blind obedience. Hegel, who does not accept bourgeois society, has a bourgeois Christian ideal. (P74)

Appearing in opposition to Hegel is Karl Marx, who states on the topic of the death of God, "Create a society which will not feel lonely without God, and

then God will disappear." He does not want to deny God, as in an atheist society, but sees the coming of communism in which the whole question of God will not exist, and even atheism will not make sense. Capitalism was a secularized version of Christianity. The democratic state, where everyone is theoretically equal, is its heaven; the economy, where there is enormous inequality, is its vale of tears. Where the people once looked to the Church for salvation, now they look to the state.

Marx and Hegel, Harrington points out, agreed that religion was the expression of community and God is dying because community is being torn apart by the reality of capitalist society. But the heir is not the heroic, this worldly consciousness of Marx's communism but the this-worldly consciousness of a hedonistic capitalism which wallows in an eternal spiritless present. And Harrington states that it is part of the price being paid for the failure of that socialist transformation Marx sought. (p. 82)

Max Weber probably delineated most clearly the marriage between Calvinism and capitalism. Weber documented the fact that early capitalism was, in part, rationalized by theologians. A society of competition (but rigidly structured competition) and rationally ordered work was replacing a system based on fear of God, now God was concerned not with keeping humanity in its place, but in humanity's "sinfulness" and the new laws are those intended to place limits on the new egotistical forces. What is not explicitly forbidden is permitted and the foundation was laid for a liberal, bourgeois ethic in which atomistic individuals are allowed to follow their own interests so long as they do not interfere with the corresponding freedom enjoyed by everyone else. (p. 112)

The Calvinistic notion of work as a "calling" was a solution to the problem of people having to work harder without the support of community and traditional

institutions. Weber says "There is now a senseless inversion of what is natural... the pursuit of money and only money, the strictest avoidance of all unaffected enjoyment, the denial of hedonistic or happiness-oriented perspectives, where money must be thought of as an end in itself, irrationally transcending the "happiness" and "utility" of the individual." The Calvinists rejected the erotic, theater, and idle talk. They were purposive ascetics in the world, contemptuous of worldly goods and remarkably successful in obtaining them, who put themselves to the task of creating the "New Jerusalem" in the New World. Unfortunately, or possibly fortunately, this religious value decayed and all that remained of it, to Harrington, was the dedication to systematic and scientific means, but the end -- the glory of God -- had disappeared and Weber looked for a new Messiah to save civilization from a calculated and rationalized destiny. (P118-119)

What Weber (and Marx) did not expect, or even dream as a possibility, was the enormous effect the new messiah would have on the world, and how ridiculous it seems now to realize that the messiah who came to save us from the work ethic and restore the erotic to our lives was Freud.

STAGE 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Freud, Harrington states, attempted to develop a scientific and secular theory to explain, among many other things, the persistence of the diabolic in the modern world. What he was searching for was a means to probe the dark underworld of the human consciousness (P.144) and wanted to free society from its religious obsession (i.e. Calvinism). There is, said Freud, in men and women "an inborn tendency to negligence, irregularity, and untrustworthiness in their work...Civilization had to put that down with the aid of religion." Freud taught us to look at the repressed in ourselves and in our society, and to draw

from that an understanding of the things which have power in our lives. While Harrington goes on to discover through Freud the repressions which led to the rise of Naziism, what Freud did for society was far more reaching and taught us in many ways to look to ourselves to meet our own needs, to look to our relationships with others (particularly our struggles with our parents) for a sense of our reality, and to look at the Ego, the Id, and especially our Superego for the source of our interpersonal conformity. While Harrington does not discuss Freud any further than to look at where Freud stood in relationship to anthropology, that he injects him at this point is very important, because actually what destroyed Calvinism was Freudianism and its insistence that Calvinism stood for the struggle between the male and his father and the representation of God was indeed based on the Calvinistic father. While Harrington's economic and social theories are heady stuff, he neglects the enormous influence Freud had on bringing back to human life the hedonistic, the sexual, the erotic, and the personal. Humanity moved on more step up the moral ladder in finding that all things were relative. To Freud, we probably owe Fletcher's situation ethics and many other modern religious thought systems.

STAGE 4. Social System and Conscience

Harrington, at this point in his book, merely touches upon one of the turning points of modern American religion, the "social gospel," but does still make the point that as humanity moved through the halls of history and philosophy, moral development went right along with it. So, Harrington says, through Karl Barth, "Perhaps strikes, general strikes, and street fights would be necessary -- although no Christian should ever exalt them...One was social democratic, but not for the social gospel." Unfortunately for Barth, many others were, and the social gospel brought about a relevance between the

Christianity of the churches and the needs of the masses in the streets. Charities began to appear, the institutional church became very different in the pre and post-World War I era than Christianity had been ever before or would be after that -- although many of the good works begun then have continued and new ones have appeared as the need arose. The politics, economics and social structure of the age leave their mark upon its theologies. Barth -- and Reinhold Niebuhr in the United States -- were Leftists. There were -- there are -- fundamentalists who see Christ as a hunted rebel and those who see him as an absolute monarch, and the social gospel and reaction to it were hallmarks of a time, which, I think, Harrington ignores because it would in fact, prove that God is still alive. Out of the social gospel and the churches which supported it came, I believe, the thrust and support of Liberation Theology, and the certain knowledge that God is alive and still dealing with human history. The social gospel was, more than anyone could imagine, a marriage between Calvinism and the Left, and a more unlikely marriage could not have been imagined for its time. In Catholicism, a similar experience might be the worker-priests of France and the Catholic theologians who have written on political as well as religious topics whom Harrington mentions on page 168.

STAGE 5. Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Harrington moves at this point to "God's Christian Burial" and to the recognition of the power of myth in the collective consciousness (which Jung had pointed out earlier). Tillich once said that once myths are opened and understood they become "broken myths." We can see what it is they symbolize and are aware of the reason for their power in our lives. Bultmann's "demythologizing," in a sense, open the myths in our religions to scrutiny. Nevertheless, myths are powerful in the individual and in the society. Myths were being

broken and the universality of their meanings was being brought home to very ordinary people through the work of popular theologians. Bultmann was probably very right in facing the utility of Christianity when he said, "Christian mythology conceals rather than conveys the message that man is prey to an in-authentic existence, that Jesus summons him to a decision, by which he can face up to his being as that of one who is going to die and so begin to live authentically." (P.165) Tillich stated that religion remained "the meaning-giving substance of culture and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself." (P166) When we begin to look at the utility of our forms, myths, and beliefs, we do not necessarily destroy them.

Quite possibly in understanding how they function in our lives, we give them new utility and move even further up the moral ladder, away from the God who controls to a religion which illuminates how God functions in our lives, as apparently Harrington is trying to do now. Concurrent with utility is social contract: the sense of obligation to others to make and abide by systems which are concerned for the welfare of all people and which recognizes all people's rights and protects them. Concomitant with this is a feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, with a concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Tillich continued, "Religion...is being ultimately concerned about that which should be our ultimate concern and God is the name for the content of that concern." Therefore, religion "is at home everywhere, namely in the depths of all functions of one's spiritual life. Religion is the dimension of depth in all of them...that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in one's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern." Is it possible that rather than being dead, God has moved us to a

higher level of concern, where we truly question what the utility of God has been in our society, come to grips with it, and disengage God from it, so that the society and God can come into their own spheres. God, to be sure, must be awfully tired of being used to keep the masses quiet, in their places, and obedient, when God truly is crying out for justice for the poor and oppressed.

LEVEL 6: Universal Ethical Principles

The sixth and highest moral level, is the recognition of universal ethical principles. Interestingly, Harrington hits upon what might signal a truth emerging: He says "I do think there is an enormous -- and distinctive-- contribution which a revived religion can make in its political united front with atheistic humanism. That explains the paradox that the decline in religious commitment, as conventionally measured by a drop in church attendance, a relaxation of doctrinal rigor and the like, might actually signal a deepening of religion...But, as many of the participants in the Catholic transformations of the past two decades stated explicitly, it is now possible that churches can become more sect-like in the good sense of the term: more serious and radical about their faith. If that were to happen, then churches sparsely filled with truly devout people might be a sign of religious growth more significant than the packed houses of worship during the 1950s. That would mean that the religious commitment to the consensus ideology I am trying to evoke here could become all the more profound."

Harrington discusses law, and states that the first principle of the new consensus is: No law is binding unless the people have an effective participation in its formulation. In Man's World, Woman's Place, Elizabeth Janeway points out that unless people are willing to obey laws they do not

exist. Unless people are willing to follow leaders, the leaders might as well not exist. The power of the weak is the power always to leave. And the enormous refugee problem in the world today points up the truth of those statements. Universally, people are unwilling to obey unjust laws, to live in antihuman nations, and to follow leaders who lead them nowhere. Harrington goes on to point out that communitarianism is an essential component of the new transcendental, along with a moral motivation based on solidarity. All of these point to the truths of level 6, which is characterized by "following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle."

To me, Harrington has not proven the death of God, merely that humanity is attempting to reach higher moral levels than those occupied by the God of his first chapter. That is not a turning away from God, but a turning toward God. In each of his chapters, Harrington portrays the social situation, the philosophical ideas, and the cultural boundaries within which people experience faith. To some, the glass is half empty. To others, it is half full. But what seems to me to be happening is that society as a whole is moving beyond the early stages of morality to a more universalistic moral sense. Without the idea of the holy (Rudolph Otto) without God, it is possible to do that through atheistic humanism, but how much easier for people to do it with the conception that God still has a hand in history and is still alive and well and working in each of us. Pogo in the 60's, devoted the pre-Christmas daily cartoon to a creature high on a mountain who was endlessly carving letters, but one could not see any one of them in entirety, until finally on Christmas Sunday, the full message was revealed, "God is not dead, he is merely unemployed."

A personal point is brought to mind in an article in Edward Fiske's, The Contemporary Religious Experience, a small book dealing with the "Death of God" theology. Fiske points out that it may be a time to rename God, and suggests that El Elyon, Elohim, El Shaddai, and of course, Yahweh have all been Old Testament names for the experience of God. If we would think of Tillich's concept of "broken myths" we might come to the realization that Yahweh in the "Death of God" movement is a broken myth. Yahweh is the God who is dead. But there are other scriptural names and identities of God, and certainly even Jesus, on the cross, recognized one of them when he cried, not for Yahweh, the militaristic, tribal-national God, whom Harrington has described and whom others have declared dead, but cried out for "Eloi," the singular of Elohim. The Els were local Gods, each on their own hill to whom people went up, as we liturgically do when we repeat, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." El Shaddai, the breasted one, is an example of a possibility. El Shaddai is the God who nurtures us at the breast, the all-sufficient, all-nourishing God. What an amazing turn-around could happen if El Shaddai replaced Jahweh. We would have a return to the mothering (not fathering) God, the nurturant, the erotic, the hedonistic, and ally it with the spiritual, thus beating down the old dualism as well. Now that would be a faith that would be hard to go to war with, or to get nationalistic about without being ridiculously close to the love-ins of the 60's, but a delightful thought nonetheless.

*Excellent development and application
of the problems brought up in
Harrington. I found a lot of valuable
insights in this paper.*

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One would not have to go far to look for a better definition of Capitalism than the above definition of the second stage of moral development.

"With the rise of capitalism, the traditional society which was both cause and effect of the Judeo-Christian God began to disintegrate. "External security and movement," Karl Marx wrote, "distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all previous periods of history. The holy shudder of pious ecstasy...had been drowned in the ice-cold water of egotistical calculation...All fixed and deeply rooted relations, with their venerable images and world views, were dissolved." (p.58)

Hegel is the master philosopher of the early capitalist era, and we have Harrington's word for Hegel.

"He was a German, living in the 'anarchy' of a fragmented, largely fictional, empire: he experienced the capitalist division of labor, with its degradation of the work process, vicariously...but it made a deep impression on him even in economically backward Germany; and he saw, and feared, the rise of a new social strata, a 'mob' without a sense of its own proper place and dignity." (p.59)

Hegel was looking for a religion which would appeal to the heart as well as to the head, and rejected Luther as having abolished Catholic authoritarianism only to replace it with his own ideological authoritarianism. Hegel believed that religion was political. "The popular feasts of the Greeks were all religious feasts to honor either a god or a man who had served the state well and therefore became godly...Religion is the place where the people defines itself...From this point of view religion is the closest of relationships with the state." And Capitalism and the State, with the help of John Calvin, became partners and made a deal, in the best tradition of level 2, where the workers would work and the barons would profit. Hegel, unfortunately, based much of what he wrote on the idea that ancient Greece and Rome was a place where there was no split between freedom and authority, subjective and objective, and the "free republican" of ancient Greece or Rome was so at one with his society that he gave his life without question. Hegel, says Harrington, was either excessively pragmatic or excessively utopian. Ultimately, he defined religion ... as the faith of capitalist society. It is the glory of Protestantism...that it honors marriage rather than celibacy, work as against charity, rational obedience as against blind obedience. Hegel, who does not accept bourgeois society, has a bourgeois Christian ideal. (P74)

Appearing in opposition to Hegel is Karl Marx, who states on the topic of the death of God, "Create a society which will not feel lonely without God, and

then God will disappear." He does not want to deny God, as in an atheist society, but sees the coming of communism in which the whole question of God will not exist, and even atheism will not make sense. Capitalism was a secularized version of Christianity. The democratic state, where everyone is theoretically equal, is its heaven; the economy, where there is enormous inequality, is its vale of tears. Where the people once looked to the Church for salvation, now they look to the state.

Marx and Hegel, Harrington points out, agreed that religion was the expression of community and God is dying because community is being torn apart by the reality of capitalist society. But the heir is not the heroic, this worldly consciousness of Marx's communism but the this-worldly consciousness of a hedonistic capitalism which wallows in an eternal spiritless present. And Harrington states that it is part of the price being paid for the failure of that socialist transformation Marx sought. (p. 82)

Max Weber probably delineated most clearly the marriage between Calvinism and capitalism. Weber documented the fact that early capitalism was, in part, rationalized by theologians. A society of competition (but rigidly structured competition) and rationally ordered work was replacing a system based on fear of God, now God was concerned not with keeping humanity in its place, but in humanity's "sinfulness" and the new laws are those intended to place limits on the new egotistical forces. What is not explicitly forbidden is permitted and the foundation was laid for a liberal, bourgeois ethic in which atomistic individuals are allowed to follow their own interests so long as they do not interfere with the corresponding freedom enjoyed by everyone else. (p. 112) The Calvinistic notion of work as a "calling" was a solution to the problem of people having to work harder without the support of community and traditional

institutions. Weber says "There is now a senseless inversion of what is natural... the pursuit of money and only money, the strictest avoidance of all unaffected enjoyment, the denial of hedonistic or happiness-oriented perspectives, where money must be thought of as an end in itself, irrationally transcending the "happiness" and "utility" of the individual." The Calvinists rejected the erotic, theater, and idle talk. They were purposive ascetics in the world, contemptuous of wordly goods and remarkably successful in obtaining them, who put themselves to the task of creating the "New Jerusalem" in the New World. Unfortunately, or possibly fortunately, this religious value decayed and all that remained of it, to Harrington, was the dedication to systematic and scientific means, but the end -- the glory of God -- had disappeared and Weber looked for a new Messiah to save civilization from a calculated and rationalized destiny. (P118-119)

What Weber (and Marx) did not expect, or even dream as a possibility, was the enormous effect the new messiah would have on the world, and how ridiculous it seems now to realize that the messiah who came to save us from the work ethic and restore the erotic to our lives was Freud.

STAGE 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Freud, Harrington states, attempted to develop a scientific and secular theory to explain, among many other things, the persistence of the diabolic in the modern world. What he was searching for was a means to probe the dark underworld of the human consciousness (P.144) and wanted to free society from its religious obsession (i.e. Calvinism). There is, said Freud, in men and women "an inborn tendency to negligence, irregularity, and untrustworthiness in their work...Civilization had to put that down with the aid of religion." Freud taught us to look at the repressed in ourselves and in our society, and to draw

from that an understanding of the things which have power in our lives. While Harrington goes on to discover through Freud the repressions which led to the rise of Naziism, what Freud did for society was far more reaching and taught us in many ways to look to ourselves to meet our own needs, to look to our relationships with others (particularly our struggles with our parents) for a sense of our reality, and to look at the Ego, the Id, and especially our Superego for the source of our interpersonal conformity. While Harrington does not discuss Freud any further than to look at where Freud stood in relationship to anthropology, that he injects him at this point is very important, because actually what destroyed Calvinism was Freudianism and its insistence that Calvinism stood for the struggle between the male and his father and the representation of God was indeed based on the Calvinistic father. While Harrington's economic and social theories are heady stuff, he neglects the enormous influence Freud had on bringing back to human life the hedonistic, the sexual, the erotic, and the personal. Humanity moved on more step up the moral ladder in finding that all things were relative. To Freud, we probably owe Fletcher's situation ethics and many other modern religious thought systems.

STAGE 4. Social System and Conscience

Harrington, at this point in his book, merely touches upon one of the turning points of modern American religion, the "social gospel," but does still make the point that as humanity moved through the halls of history and philosophy, moral development went right along with it. So, Harrington says, through Karl Barth, "Perhaps strikes, general strikes, and street fights would be necessary -- although no Christian should ever exalt them...One was social democratic, but not for the social gospel." Unfortunately for Barth, many others were, and the social gospel brought about a relevance between the

Christianity of the churches and the needs of the masses in the streets. Charities began to appear, the institutional church became very different in the pre and post-World War I era than Christianity had been ever before or would be after that -- although many of the good works begun then have continued and new ones have appeared as the need arose. The politics, economics and social structure of the age leave their mark upon its theologies. Barth -- and Reinhold Niebuhr in the United States -- were Leftists. There were -- there are -- fundamentalists who see Christ as a hunted rebel and those who see him as an absolute monarch, and the social gospel and reaction to it were hallmarks of a time, which, I think, Harrington ignores because it would in fact, prove that God is still alive. Out of the social gospel and the churches which supported it came, I believe, the thrust and support of Liberation Theology, and the certain knowledge that God is alive and still dealing with human history. The social gospel was, more than anyone could imagine, a marriage between Calvinism and the Left, and a more unlikely marriage could not have been imagined for its time. In Catholicism, a similar experience might be the worker-priests of France and the Catholic theologians who have written on political as well as religious topics whom Harrington mentions on page 168.

STAGE 5. Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Harrington moves at this point to "God's Christian Burial" and to the recognition of the power of myth in the collective consciousness (which Jung had pointed out earlier). Tillich once said that once myths are opened and understood they become "broken myths." We can see what it is they symbolize and are aware of the reason for their power in our lives. Bultmann's "demythologizing," in a sense, open the myths in our religions to scrutiny. Nevertheless, myths are powerful in the individual and in the society. Myths were being

broken and the universality of their meanings was being brought home to very ordinary people through the work of popular theologians. Bultmann was probably very right in facing the utility of Christianity when he said, "Christian mythology conceals rather than conveys the message that man is prey to an in-authentic existence, that Jesus summons him to a decision, by which he can face up to his being as that of one who is going to die and so begin to live authentically." (P.165) Tillich stated that religion remained "the meaning-giving substance of culture and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself." (P166) When we begin to look at the utility of our forms, myths, and beliefs, we do not necessarily destroy them.

Quite possibly in understanding how they function in our lives, we give them new utility and move even further up the moral ladder, away from the God who controls to a religion which illuminates how God functions in our lives, as apparently Harrington is trying to do now. Concurrent with utility is social contract: the sense of obligation to others to make and abide by systems which are concerned for the welfare of all people and which recognizes all people's rights and protects them. Concomitant with this is a feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, with a concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Tillich continued, "Religion...is being ultimately concerned about that which should be our ultimate concern and God is the name for the content of that concern." Therefore, religion "is at home everywhere, namely in the depths of all functions of one's spiritual life. Religion is the dimension of depth in all of them...that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in one's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern." Is it possible that rather than being dead, God has moved us to a

higher level of concern, where we truly question what the utility of God has been in our society, come to grips with it, and disengage God from it, so that the society and God can come into their own spheres. God, to be sure, must be awfully tired of being used to keep the masses quiet, in their places, and obedient, when God truly is crying out for justice for the poor and oppressed.

LEVEL 6: Universal Ethical Principles

The sixth and highest moral level, is the recognition of universal ethical principles. Interestingly, Harrington hits upon what might signal a truth emerging: He says "I do think there is an enormous -- and distinctive-- contribution which a revived religion can make in its political united front with atheistic humanism. That explains the paradox that the decline in religious commitment, as conventionally measured by a drop in church attendance, a relaxation of doctrinal rigor and the like, might actually signal a deepening of religion...But, as many of the participants in the Catholic transformations of the past two decades stated explicitly, it is now possible that churches can become more sect-like in the good sense of the term: more serious and radical about their faith. If that were to happen, then churches sparsely filled with truly devout people might be a sign of religious growth more significant than the packed houses of worship during the 1950s. That would mean that the religious commitment to the consensus ideology I am trying to evoke here could become all the more profound."

Harrington discusses law, and states that the first principle of the new consensus is: No law is binding unless the people have an effective participation in its formulation. In Man's World, Woman's Place, Elizabeth Janeway points out that unless people are willing to obey laws they do not

exist. Unless people are willing to follow leaders, the leaders might as well not exist. The power of the weak is the power always to leave. And the enormous refugee problem in the world today points up the truth of those statements. Universally, people are unwilling to obey unjust laws, to live in antihuman nations, and to follow leaders who lead them nowhere. Harrington goes on to point out that communitarianism is an essential component of the new transcendental, along with a moral motivation based on solidarity. All of these point to the truths of level 6, which is characterized by "following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle."

To me, Harrington has not proven the death of God, merely that humanity is attempting to reach higher moral levels than those occupied by the God of his first chapter. That is not a turning away from God, but a turning toward God. In each of his chapters, Harrington portrays the social situation, the philosophical ideas, and the cultural boundaries within which people experience faith. To some, the glass is half empty. To others, it is half full. But what seems to me to be happening is that society as a whole is moving beyond the early stages of morality to a more universalistic moral sense. Without the idea of the holy (Rudolph Otto) without God, it is possible to do that through atheistic humanism, but how much easier for people to do it with the conception that God still has a hand in history and is still alive and well and working in each of us. Pogo in the 60's, devoted the pre-Christmas daily cartoon to a creature high on a mountain who was endlessly carving letters, but one could not see any one of them in entirety, until finally on Christmas Sunday, the full message was revealed, "God is not dead, he is merely unemployed."

A personal point is brought to mind in an article in Edward Fiske's, The Contemporary Religious Experience, a small book dealing with the "Death of God" theology. Fiske points out that it may be a time to rename God, and suggests that El Elyon, Elohim, El Shaddai, and of course, Yahweh have all been Old Testament names for the experience of God. If we would think of Tillich's concept of "broken myths" we might come to the realization that Yahweh in the "Death of God" movement is a broken myth. Yahweh is the God who is dead. But there are other scriptural names and identities of God, and certainly even Jesus, on the cross, recognized one of them when he cried, not for Yahweh, the militaristic, tribal-national God, whom Harrington has described and whom others have declared dead, but cried out for "Eloi," the singular of Elohim. The Els were local Gods, each on their own hill to whom people went up, as we liturgically do when we repeat, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." El Shaddai, the breasted one, is an example of a possibility. El Shaddai is the God who nurtures us at the breast, the all-sufficient, all-nourishing God. What an amazing turn-around could happen if El Shaddai replaced Jahweh. We would have a return to the mothering (not fathering) God, the nurturant, the erotic, the hedonistic, and ally it with the spiritual, thus beating down the old dualism as well. Now that would be a faith that would be hard to go to war with, or to get nationalistic about without being ridiculously close to the love-ins of the 60's, but a delightful thought nonetheless.

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COULD ETHICS BE CHRISTIAN?

James Gustafson, in his book, Can Ethics Be Christian?, suggests that ethics does not permit "private" or "particular" historical or religious interests; ethics is ethics only when the basic criterion of judgment is whether all rational and disinterested persons could agree on the principles developed.¹

From one perspective, it would seem to me that given this basis, there truly is no such thing as Christian ethics, and particularly, since ethics obeys rules which are essentially non-Christian and possibly even de-Christian (As opposed to anti-Christian, I am using de-Christian to suggest that obeying the ethical rules might even tend to make a person less of a Christian.) these ideas have no place in Christianity today, except as historical detritus, while they might have had validity in a prior age with different norms for what constituted "the good life," thus sharing Charles Curran's insight that Catholic theology has come to see the need for an historical understanding in its approach.²

From a second perspective, it would also seem that given what medieval Christianity did with the ethical methods, particularly in dealing with "natural law", and given what the disciplines of modern psychology, sociology, and anthropology teach about what is "natural", Christianity continued to use the methods of philosophical ethics to produce a stepchild, or maybe even a bastard, whose name, unfortunately, seems to be Christian ethics, which is neither Christian nor ethical. Philosophical ethics, however, should be restricted to the formal task of establishing the validity of ethical experience and not dealing with concrete ethics such as Christian ethics. To attempt to mix them tends to make for (pardon the expression) an abortion. Again, Curran says:

THE HISTORY OF THE

The history of the world is a long and varied one, and it is one that has been written by many different people. It is a story that has been told in many different ways, and it is a story that has been told in many different languages. It is a story that has been told in many different times, and it is a story that has been told in many different places. It is a story that has been told in many different ways, and it is a story that has been told in many different languages. It is a story that has been told in many different times, and it is a story that has been told in many different places.

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This more historically conscious (moral) theology will tend to have a different concept of "man" -- one that is more open than closed. Human beings are not determined by a fixed nature existing within. The genius of the human being in all generations has been the ability for self-creation and self-direction. We are constantly open to a tremendous variety of actions and options. Any theological position based on a closed concept of human nature, something already within, to which one must conform oneself and one's actions, will be an inaccurate understanding of the human reality and tend to result in unacceptable moral conclusions.³

Historicity was the subject of a paper which showed in evolutionary terms how the western world has managed, despite religion, to grow through the six moral stages delineated by Lawrence Kohlberg (based on the work of Jean Piaget, a developmental psychologist, in logical and cognitive development). That paper is appended because it is germane to some of the questions, and helps one to understand this author's perspective. Moral theology does not always seem to be aware of the datedness and insularity of its approach. Rahner points out that theology's possibility of error is ultimately rooted in its historical character.⁴

Likewise, current Catholic moral theology seems not to be aware of the stages in moral development and hence, rather than helping people grow into more ethical beings, certain Christian leaders seem determined to hold people at the lower stages of moral development through the time-bound methods of philosophy, rather than bringing them into the current century and assisting in their growth. The question of why this is so presents itself, and an obvious answer, "Because they are more easily controlled that way," seems almost too obvious. It is as though

they were frightened by the idea of a Christian ethic based on forgiveness and love -- considering that the love of which we speak is "total positive regard" or "unconditional love," as modern psychological parlance puts it.

Last winter, for another course, one of the readings assigned was Kolakowski's, Religion, if there is no God... In that book, he makes the statement that, "scholastic methods of supporting religious truth with rational arguments were progressively losing credibility and efficacy, and although the masters of the medieval schools never stopped exercising their semantic and logical skills, they were soon to be regarded as uninteresting remnants of a past age, incapable of competing with, let alone matching, new intellectual trends..."⁵ If it is true that moral theology, as Charles Curran states, is constantly in dialogue with the empirical and social sciences in order to better understand humanity, changes in politics, science, economics, and sociology cannot remain unreflected in approaches to moral theology.⁶ It is unfortunate that the medieval philosophical ethics scholastic-rationalistic methodology which much of moral theology employs can indeed rationalize into acceptability acts and moral concepts which "new intellectual trends," like psychology and sociology, find repugnant. To make this worse, Christian ethicists then place the imprimatur of their denomination on these repugnant concepts, and they are codified for the members of that denomination as reality, as morality, and, even, as ethics.

This is not necessarily good for human beings, is not honest-dealing with the members of Christian denominations, and in the best sense of the word is unethical because it allows us to use semantic and logical games to declare the unseemly good and often the good immoral only because by the tools used, it can be proven; on the other hand, using other tools, the total reverse might be equally good or better.

If it is true that the task of the ethician is to study the ways in which people make decisions and to point out those choices believed to be right, good, or fitting, it would be assumed that not only ways in which decisions are made, but also the quantifiable moral/ethical level of that decision might be a handy tool by which to test the maturity of one's ethical decisions.

According to Kohlberg, the six levels of moral development are:

1. Heteronomous Morality - To avoid breaking rules backed by punishment, obedience of its own sake, and avoiding physical damage to persons and property.
2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange - Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interest and needs, and letting others do the same. Right is what's fair, what's an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement.
3. Mutual interpersonal Expectations, Relationship and Interpersonal Conformity - Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in your role as son/daughter, brother/sister, friend, etc. "Being good" is important and means having good motives, showing concern about others. It also means keeping mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect and gratitude.
4. Social System and Conscience - Fulfilling the actual duties to which you have agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties. Right is also contributing to society, the group, the institution.
5. Social Contract or Utility - Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to your group. These relative rules should usually be upheld, however, in the interest of impartiality and because they are the social contract. Some nonrelative values and rights like life and liberty, however, must be upheld in any society and regardless of majority opinion.

5.

6. Universal Ethical Principles -

Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice: the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Albert Knudson, prior dean of the Boston University School of Theology, wrote, "The basic elements in the moral law are inherent in the human mind and in the structure of human society, and must have been more or less apparent to earnest men in all periods of the world's history. Moral progress consists not so much in the discovery of new principles, as in the deeper penetration into the meaning of principles already voiced in the past, and in their more consistent and thoroughgoing application to the changing social order. Indeed, originality, as some one has said, means thinking for oneself, not thinking differently from other people."⁸ Given Kohlberg's view and what Dean Knudson has said, it would be very unlikely that any religious faith which did not ask one to look for universal principles of justice never reaches the highest level of ethical behavior.

William Stringfellow, an attorney and also an ethicist, states, "...Biblically speaking, the singular, straightforward issue of ethics...is how to live humanly during the fall. Any viable ethic -- which is to say, any ethic worthy of human attention and practice, any ethics which manifest and verify hope -- is both individual and social. It must deal with human decision and action in relation to other creatures, notably the principalities and powers in the very midst of the conflict, distortion, alienation, disorientation, chaos, decadence of the Fall."⁹ In other words, it must begin where people are -- now. This means,

if one is truly aware of what Stringfellow is saying, one must not look to the past (i.e. Catholicism's insistence on the 14th Century as the greatest century possible) nor to the future (Fundamentalism's "pie in the sky, when I die, later on by and by) but to the present for the answers. To look only to the past or only to the future for answers to ethical questions concerning human beings invariably dehumanizes the persons living in the now. The Protestant hymn, "Once to Every Man and Nation," has the line "New teach new duties ...that makes ancient truths uncouth." Stringfellow then points out that the question becomes "How can a person act humanly now." There is no way to act humanly without becoming implicated with all other human beings, without ever assigning to any of them the role of "other." There is no way that using 14th Century logic, rationalism, or "natural law, that someone will not fall heir to the role of "other," be it the poor, females, racial minorities of whatever kind, sexual minorities, etc. So long as that construct exists, someone will suffer because it is based on ideas that are no longer true. We recognize that our being in the imago dei is in being more than rational mind. We are incarnate and to think otherwise is to deny the incarnation of Jesus. We are flesh, blood, emotions, appetites -- and from the Protestant view, at least, so was Jesus. To condemn humanity to dualism, in which the rational is good and the physical is evil, is to deny the wholeness of the incarnation and the wholeness of creation in which God looked at the creatures and pronounced them tov. Here is the essential evil -- or unethicalness -- of the natural law theory. It condemns the physical and all that that stands for to the realm of sin and punishment and that is basically a Level I way of looking at life. It is ethical, but only barely. For the church to maintain people at this level is totally out of keeping with modern thinking on how morality or ethics develop within the person. Additionally, Reinhold Niebuhr points out that "Reason may

not only justify egoism prematurely, but actually give it a force which it does not possess in nonrational nature."¹⁰

Knudson reminds us of the essential ethical emphases in Protestantism: i.e. the sanctification of the common life and the social application of Christian ethics, which change diametrically the thrust of Christian ethics away from the Catholic perspective of moral theology. Therefore, virginity was not honored above marriage and the contemplative life was not holier than the active. Protestants became more convinced through the centuries that they had a duty to bring about the kingdom of God on earth; society was plastic and could be changed and if society could be changed, people could be also through transforming their surroundings. Natural law did not hold in the Protestant statement. Since humanity was transformable by the forgiving love of God, the "unconditional love" of God this promise of grace was the great leveler, it could be appropriated to anyone.

Social reform and liberation became inherent in the Protestant conception of social ethics. Here the two ideas tie together. If social reform and liberation are the highest forms of ethical Christianity, then the ethical Christian is not so concerned with private pietism and good behavior as with bringing about the dominion of God on earth. Many things could bring about this dominion; i.e. population control, thus not condemning huge hordes of people to poverty; peace movements; fair labor practices; and all of the movement which became known in Protestant circles as the Social Gospel. (See Appendix A. P.9) In many instances, the great divergence between what is considered ethical behavior, even in the private sphere, between Catholics and Protestants is centered in the differing vision of how to bring about the dominion of God. From this Protes-

tant's view, it is here that the personal pietistic faith of Roman Catholics and Evangelical Fundamentalists differ from the social gospel-oriented mainline Protestant denominations and why their views of moral theology and/or ethics are vitally different. All three see the dominion of God (the beatific vision?) in terms of their own theology and the differing views on how to bring that about and/or how to live in anticipation-expectation of the dominion's coming and when/where it will come (pre- and post-millennialism, for example) ultimately color one's concept of ethical behavior in the post-fall/pre-dominion now.

James Gustafson gives some insights into the process of becoming an ethical person as he describes Reinhold Niebuhr's conception of Christian ethics:

Ethics is knowledge of ourselves in relation to our knowledge of God. And self knowledge is no mere luxury to be cultivated during idle moments; it is essential to the responsible life. Its relation to the responsible life is not such that we can derive from our statements about ourselves further statements about what we are always to do; Niebuhr does not set out a body of propositions about the essential nature of man, and from that body of propositions formulate another one pertaining to what we ought to do. Self-knowledge affects our moral life in more complicated and subtle ways...Reflection on the moral life can help us achieve a unity, a first loyalty, a center of personal integrity. It does this by aiding us to analyze the variety of commands we hear, the conflicts of values in which we are engaged, and the relativity of all values in relation to the one ultimate Good. It aids us in our decisions about the relations of values to each other, about the course of our active life...He refers to the importance of hamartia of "missing the mark" as one aspect of our moral

predicament...Ethics cannot guarantee that one will always hit the mark, but it is an aid to accuracy. Ethics helps us to understand ourselves as responsible beings, our world as the place in which the responsible existence of the human community is exercised. (We) are not relieved of personal responsibility to exercise freedom, capacity for judgment and action in the world. ¹¹

H. Richard Niebuhr points out that both teleology and deontology have their problems, but the response oriented ethic which he envisions, suggests that the questions which need to be asked and answered are "What is going on?," "What is being done to me?" and then "What shall I do?" rather than "What is my end?" and "What is my ultimate law?" He goes on to say that our actions are responsible not only insofar as they are reactions to interpreted actions upon us but also insofar as they are made in anticipation of answers to our answers. ¹²

Niebuhr's response-oriented ethic is located at at Level VI in Kohlberg's scheme of things, and there are many levels in between, social contract, for example being at Stage 5.

Kohlberg has further delineated the reasons for right behavior and the social perspectives of the stages in these ways:

Level 1. Avoidance of punishment and the superior power of authorities.	<u>Egocentric point of view.</u> Doesn't consider the interests of others or recognize that they differ from the actor's; doesn't relate two points of view. Actions are considered physically rather than in terms of psychological interests of others. Confusion of authorities perspectives with one's own.
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Primarily, most churches demand Level I to Level III thinking of their adherents, and there is so much more. Natural law, like Level I thinking,

holds actions as "purely physical rather than in terms of the psychological interests of others." Included in Level 2, although not mentioned here, is the concept that we are loyal to "our group" and our group's way of thinking and the us/other concept, which so many churches deplorably maintain.

Level 2.	To serve one's own needs or interests in a world where you have to recognize that other people have their interests, too.	<u>Concrete individualistic perspective.</u> Aware that everybody has his own interest to pursue and these conflict, so that right is relative (in the concrete individualistic sense.)
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Level 3.	The need to be a good person in your own eyes and those of others. Your caring for others. Belief in the Golden Rule. Desire to maintain rules and authority which support stereotypical good behavior.	<u>Perspective of the individual in relationships with other individuals.</u> Aware of shared feelings, agreements, and expectations which take primacy over individual interests. Relates points of view through the concrete Golden Rule, putting yourself in the other guy's shoes. Does not yet consider generalized system perspective.
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This is the level of the "good Christian" kind of thinking which is ordinarily taught in our Sunday Schools.

Level 4.	To keep the institution going as a whole, to avoid breakdown in the system, "if everybody did it," or the imperative of conscience to to meet one's defined obligations.	<u>Differentiates societal point of view from interpersonal agreement or motives.</u> Takes the point of view of the system that defines roles and rules. Considers individual relations in terms of place in the system.
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Utilitarianism, unfortunately, seems to rank higher on Kohlberg's scale than does most of Christianity.

Level 5.	A sense of obligation to law because of one's social contract to make and abide by laws for the welfare of of all and for the protection of all people's rights. A feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, to family, friendship, trust and work obligations. Concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of overall utility, "the greatest good for the greatest number."	<u>Prior-to-society perspective.</u> Perspective of a rational individual aware of values and rights prior to social attachments and contracts. Integrates perspectives by formal by formal mechanisms of agreement, contract, objective impartiality and and due process. Considers moral and legal points of view; recognizes they sometimes conflict and finds it difficult to integrate them.
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This is the Hobbesian contract society into which people enter as atomic individuals, making partial commitments to each other for the sake of limited ends or maintenance of certain laws.

Level 6. The belief as a rational person in the validity of universal moral principles and a sense of personal commitment to them.

Perspective of a moral point of view
from which social arrangements derive. Perspective is that of any rational individual recognizing the nature of morality or the fact that persons are ends in themselves and must be treated as such.¹³

Here, I believe, is where the church fails, because it does not treat human beings as ends in themselves but rather dehumanizes them, not recognizing the actual needs of actual human beings may be different from person to person, and that therefore persons have the necessity of making responses with full thought toward what the consequences of their actions are, but nevertheless, not making them in response to something "out there," but rather to something "in here." In effect, this is the Protestant ethic which says, "God is acting in all actions upon you. So respond to all actions upon you as to respond to God's action" and could be thought of as deontological, but Niebuhr has already separated it from deontology in claiming that the deontological equivalent to his statement would be, "Obey God's law in all your obediences to finite rules."¹⁴

Liberation ethics (Swomley, 1972) says that "all people are involved in evil, by which is meant anything that keeps people from becoming genuinely free, whether that thing is a social structure, an inner drive to attain authority over others, or some addictive personal habit. Everyone is to some degree corrupted by sin, which is the acceptance or willing of such unfreedom. Liberation ethics does not accent the transformation of systems that new men free from sin will emerge...However, the way society is organized does condition human conduct, and

humans can be improved by membership in a society that respects each person as a brother or sister." Our word freedom contains, from its origin in freon, the concept of rights belonging to human beings who are dear or loved (the same root gives us friend) because they are not considered as tools. Anyone whom we genuinely love must be free to realize his selfhood or to pursue his potentiality to the fullest. Love is the affirmation rather than the possession of another. Liberation requires freedom for the individual in a free society.

Liberation ethics...emphasizes a life style or orientation of respect for persons...It is much more concerned with changing systems than in sustaining the rules of outmoded structures, although it recognized the validity of rules and laws which are intended to enhance respect for human life and seeks to strengthen them...It emphasizes a redemptive or liberating style of life made evident preeminently in the activity of Jesus but also demonstrated in the social action of Mohandas Ghandi, Martin Luther King, and others who gave their lives for human liberation.¹⁵

Swomley goes on to describe liberation ethics as embodying a kind of love which is not sentimental, but which recognizes the price one pays for engaging in the liberation of human beings through suffering and self-denial. It also refuses to inflict more violence on those caught in the system because the real enemies are the systems that demean and dehumanize all of us. Poverty, racism, and estrangement are powerful inducements to respond to what is happening to one in ways that may seem unethical if one is standing outside, but which may seem highly ethical to the one caught in the system. Liberation ethics proposes that the prescription which gives real direction to conduct should be based on

redemption, which is defined as "liberating persons from anything which enslaves them." That which is good functions redemptively, that which is bad does not. If all people who are oppressed refuse to support nonredemptive systems, liberation would be at hand, and the dominion of God would be on earth. As was pointed out earlier, one's view of ethics is colored by one's view of the dominion of God. Ethics could be Christian if it would support that which is redemptive and deny that which is not. Such a simple categorization would entail deciding what is redemptive, but one should be able as a Christian to look at the life of Christ and from that draw conclusions as to what would be redemptive in the framework of Christ's teaching, but more importantly in the way he himself conducted his life.

Ethics could be Christian beginning with the idea that Christians would need first to see each other in redemptive light. Anything which is done to another which is not redemptive/liberating must be put right. The church would be a good place to start, if we could convince the system that it was first of all nonredemptive. After that, the dominion of God comes easily.

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THE POLITICS AT GOD'S FUNERAL

"God is dead! Long live religion without God!" seems to me to be Harrington's final cry, and somehow that seems like a grand cop out. Harrington wants all the blessings of liberal faith without any belief structure to accompany it. He wants "Dr. Feelgood's religion," and a kind of misty view of the dominion of God without God. In a way, I feel like I need to hand Harrington the business card of the pastor of the local Universalist-Unitarian Church and suggest that they sit down for a good, long talk. Maybe they have something to offer each other.

As I read The Politics at God's Funeral, after having read Sam Keen's book, another book of Sam Keen's (with Jim Fowler) kept coming to mind, and some of the structure for this paper will be drawn from that book. Life Maps, Keen's study of moral development, seems to provide a key for what Harrington is talking about. Keen and Fowler describe Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan's six stages of moral development (based, by the way, on the work of Jean Piaget in logical and cognitive development); stages which are sequential, hierarchical, invariant and universal. These six characteristic stages are:

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|--|--|
| 1. Heteronomous Morality - | To avoid breaking rules backed by punishment, obedience for its own sake, and avoiding physical damage to persons and property. |
| 2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange | Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interest and needs and letting others do the same. Right is what's fair, what's an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement. |
| 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships and Interpersonal Conformity | Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in your role as son/daughter, brother/sister, friend, etc. |

2.

3. (continued)

"Being good" is important and means having good motives, showing concern about others. It also means keeping mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect and gratitude.

4. Social System and Conscience

Fulfilling the actual duties to which you have agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties. Right is also contributing to society, the group, or institution.

5. Social Contract or Utility

Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to your group. These relative rules should usually be upheld, however, in the interest of impartiality and because they are the social contract. Some nonrelative values and rights like life and liberty, however, must be upheld in any society and regardless of majority opinion.

6. Universal Ethical Principles

Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice: the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.¹

Given this framework, how does the death of the societal God which Harrington delineates fit into this framework?

Harrington defines the God who is dead or dying as the God who has been used politically for the following:

1. the legitimization of established power and sometimes revolt against it;
2. the transcendent symbol of the common consciousness of an existing community;
3. the foundation of all other values;
4. the organizing principle of a system of the authoritative allocation of social roles (the God of Western feudalism) or the motivating and ethical principle of a system of individual mobility (the God of Western capitalism);
5. The guarantor of personal, ethnic, and national identity;
6. A philosopher for the non-philosophers, including the illiterate. (p.7)

If one looks carefully at Kohlberg's stages, as they are delineated by Keen and Fowler, an interesting layering out occurs with the historical claims to the death of God.

STAGE I. Heteronomous Morality.

Beginning with a description of the feudal world which existed, rigid, parochial, and hierarchical, Harrington quotes Aquinas, "As God created the world, and placed everything in its proper place and brought forth such order that the world appears as a harmonious whole, so too must the founders of states assign each member his proper place, and so order things that an organic, unified state articulated in itself emerges." (p.109) Under feudalism work was authoritatively allocated to individuals and classes, each group was confined to its traditional way of working and rewarded on a scale determined by the community, private property was conditioned on the performance of social function, there was no market in land and the serf was tied, once and for all, to one occupation. (p. 110)

Harrington begins with the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment and describes it as a cause of a revolution which occurred predating the Industrial Revolution. It was for Harrington, social (the emergence of a class of "free" laborers and of a bourgeoisie), cultural (the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution of which it was a part), economic in a nontechnical sense (the social organization in a traditional technology), and technological (the Industrial Revolution).(p.13) The philosophical master of the time, to Harrington, was Kant, and he describes Kant's effect upon the times. He says, "Humans were now creating reality for themselves instead of accepting it as a given from God, and the laws within the mind were being imposed upon the external world."(p.14) Further, to quote Harrington again, "Kant rigorously and profoundly theorized a commonplace of the modern age: the war between "is" and "ought"." Science, he

felt, was transforming reality and the realm of values. Kant posits three bases for morality in the world; God, immortality and freedom. The rise of "science" was forcing God out of business, and the search was on for a substitute deity to take over the social functions of the dying God of tradition. The God Kant suggested was History. History describes Man (to use Kant's word) as "an animal which, when it lives within its own species needs a master." (p.19) Kant states the very idea of moral responsibility has become problematic. We feel moral responsibility. But experience is the part of that world of appearances which humans can only conceptualize through deterministic laws, and these can hardly prove that we are free -- that is, that we act independently of external laws -- and freedom "is only an idea whose reality is dubious." (p. 20) Science and History, if I understand Kant correctly, have placed humanity at the point where outside forces are no longer enough to make us moral; God, the God which has kept society from destroying itself, no longer exists, and only Science and History can, through our desire for immortality presumably, make us good.

...even if they do not make men ethically better, do make them more cultured, conquer the sensual drives and thereby prepare men for a domination in which reason alone shall have power. While the evil which afflicts us, in part because of nature and in part because of man's incessant egotism, is still there, at the same time the powers of the soul rise up, increase and become stronger, so as not to be subordinated to those natural drives and allow us to feel equal to the higher ends which lie hidden within us. (p.23)

Based on Kohlberg's levels of morality, what Kant essentially is saying is that humanity is ready for a new level of morality. The first level, the level at which humanity was in thrall to kings and princes, to nobles who had power over them, and who exacted obedience in direct response to the amount of punishment ("Off with their heads!") effected, was at an end with the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, and with the techno-

logical rise of Science and its sister muse History. Humanity no longer was at the base level of morality where it "avoided breaking rules backed by punishment, was obedient for its own sake, and was merely avoiding physical damage to persons and property" as a proper level of civilization. God, who had kept all in order through the hierarchical "divine right of Kings," was no longer able to do so in this manner. "Religion was a despicable means of duping the mob into accepting irrational tyrannies, and a necessary means of keeping people content under rational, benevolent authority." Religion, to Napoleon, for example, makes tolerable the intolerable. (p.25) Unfortunately, the Enlightenment did not go far enough. Its problem was, and I quote Harrington, "was a genuine appeal to universal values but committed to a particular, class-dominated social order;...it was apologetic, ideological, because it also despised the mob and looked for consoling myths with which to keep it quiet... but ... the people turned out to be much more intelligent than...suspected. This led to a crisis of the legitimacy of the established authority. (p.30) God, decided Kant, was dead. The masses, however, were ready for a new step up the ladder of morality.

STAGE 2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange

One would not have to go far to look for a better definition of Capitalism than the above definition of the second stage of moral development.

"With the rise of capitalism, the traditional society which was both cause and effect of the Judeo-Christian God began to disintegrate. "External security and movement," Karl Marx wrote, "distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all previous periods of history. The holy shudder of pious ecstasy...had been drowned in the ice-cold water of egotistical calculation...All fixed and deeply rooted relations, with their venerable images and world views, were dissolved." (p.58)

Hegel is the master philosopher of the early capitalist era, and we have Harrington's word for Hegel.

"He was a German, living in the 'anarchy' of a fragmented, largely fictional, empire: he experienced the capitalist division of labor, with its degradation of the work process, vicariously...but it made a deep impression on him even in economically backward Germany; and he saw, and feared, the rise of a new social strata, a 'mob' without a sense of its own proper place and dignity." (p.59)

Hegel was looking for a religion which would appeal to the heart as well as to the head, and rejected Luther as having abolished Catholic authoritarianism only to replace it with his own ideological authoritarianism. Hegel believed that religion was political. "The popular feasts of the Greeks were all religious feasts to honor either a god or a man who had served the state well and therefore became godly...Religion is the place where the people defines itself...From this point of view religion is the closest of relationships with the state." And Capitalism and the State, with the help of John Calvin, became partners and made a deal, in the best tradition of level 2, where the workers would work and the barons would profit. Hegel, unfortunately, based much of what he wrote on the idea that ancient Greece and Rome was a place where there was no split between freedom and authority, subjective and objective, and the "free republican" of ancient Greece or Rome was so at one with his society that he gave his life without question. Hegel, says Harrington, was either excessively pragmatic or excessively utopian. Ultimately, he defined religion ... as the faith of capitalist society. It is the glory of Protestantism...that it honors marriage rather than celibacy, work as against charity, rational obedience as against blind obedience. Hegel, who does not accept bourgeois society, has a bourgeois Christian ideal. (P74)

Appearing in opposition to Hegel is Karl Marx, who states on the topic of the death of God, "Create a society which will not feel lonely without God, and

then God will disappear." He does not want to deny God, as in an atheist society, but sees the coming of communism in which the whole question of God will not exist, and even atheism will not make sense. Capitalism was a secularized version of Christianity. The democratic state, where everyone is theoretically equal, is its heaven; the economy, where there is enormous inequality, is its vale of tears. Where the people once looked to the Church for salvation, now they look to the state.

Marx and Hegel, Harrington points out, agreed that religion was the expression of community and God is dying because community is being torn apart by the reality of capitalist society. But the heir is not the heroic, this worldly consciousness of Marx's communism but the this-worldly consciousness of a hedonistic capitalism which wallows in an eternal spiritless present. And Harrington states that it is part of the price being paid for the failure of that socialist transformation Marx sought. (p. 82)

Max Weber probably delineated most clearly the marriage between Calvinism and capitalism. Weber documented the fact that early capitalism was, in part, rationalized by theologians. A society of competition (but rigidly structured competition) and rationally ordered work was replacing a system based on fear of God, now God was concerned not with keeping humanity in its place, but in humanity's "sinfulness" and the new laws are those intended to place limits on the new egotistical forces. What is not explicitly forbidden is permitted and the foundation was laid for a liberal, bourgeois ethic in which atomistic individuals are allowed to follow their own interests so long as they do not interfere with the corresponding freedom enjoyed by everyone else. (p. 112) The Calvinistic notion of work as a "calling" was a solution to the problem of people having to work harder without the support of community and traditional

institutions. Weber says "There is now a senseless inversion of what is natural... the pursuit of money and only money, the strictest avoidance of all unaffected enjoyment, the denial of hedonistic or happiness-oriented perspectives, where money must be thought of as an end in itself, irrationally transcending the "happiness" and "utility" of the individual." The Calvinists rejected the erotic, theater, and idle talk. They were purposive ascetics in the world, contemptuous of wordly goods and remarkably successful in obtaining them, who put themselves to the task of creating the "New Jerusalem" in the New World. Unfortunately, or possibly fortunately, this religious value decayed and all that remained of it, to Harrington, was the dedication to systematic and scientific means, but the end -- the glory of God -- had disappeared and Weber looked for a new Messiah to save civilization from a calculated and rationalized destiny. (P118-119)

What Weber (and Marx) did not expect, or even dream as a possibility, was the enormous effect the new messiah would have on the world, and how ridiculous it seems now to realize that the messiah who came to save us from the work ethic and restore the erotic to our lives was Freud.

STAGE 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Freud, Harrington states, attempted to develop a scientific and secular theory to explain, among many other things, the persistence of the diabolic in the modern world. What he was searching for was a means to probe the dark underworld of the human consciousness (P.144) and wanted to free society from its religious obsession (i.e. Calvinism). There is, said Freud, in men and women "an inborn tendency to negligence, irregularity, and untrustworthiness in their work...Civilization had to put that down with the aid of religion." Freud taught us to look at the repressed in ourselves and in our society, and to draw

from that an understanding of the things which have power in our lives. While Harrington goes on to discover through Freud the repressions which led to the rise of Naziism, what Freud did for society was far more reaching and taught us in many ways to look to ourselves to meet our own needs, to look to our relationships with others (particularly our struggles with our parents) for a sense of our reality, and to look at the Ego, the Id, and especially our Superego for the source of our interpersonal conformity. While Harrington does not discuss Freud any further than to look at where Freud stood in relationship to anthropology, that he injects him at this point is very important, because actually what destroyed Calvinism was Freudianism and its insistence that Calvinism stood for the struggle between the male and his father and the representation of God was indeed based on the Calvinistic father. While Harrington's economic and social theories are heady stuff, he neglects the enormous influence Freud had on bringing back to human life the hedonistic, the sexual, the erotic, and the personal. Humanity moved on more step up the moral ladder in finding that all things were relative. To Freud, we probably owe Fletcher's situation ethics and many other modern religious thought systems.

STAGE 4. Social System and Conscience

Harrington, at this point in his book, merely touches upon one of the turning points of modern American religion, the "social gospel," but does still make the point that as humanity moved through the halls of history and philosophy, moral development went right along with it. So, Harrington says, through Karl Barth, "Perhaps strikes, general strikes, and street fights would be necessary -- although no Christian should ever exalt them...One was social democratic, but not for the social gospel." Unfortunately for Barth, many others were, and the social gospel brought about a relevance between the

Christianity of the churches and the needs of the masses in the streets. Charities began to appear, the institutional church became very different in the pre and post-World War I era than Christianity had been ever before or would be after that -- although many of the good works begun then have continued and new ones have appeared as the need arose. The politics, economics and social structure of the age leave their mark upon its theologies. Barth -- and Reinhold Niebuhr in the United States -- were Leftists. There were -- there are -- fundamentalists who see Christ as a hunted rebel and those who see him as an absolute monarch, and the social gospel and reaction to it were hallmarks of a time, which, I think, Harrington ignores because it would in fact, prove that God is still alive. Out of the social gospel and the churches which supported it came, I believe, the thrust and support of Liberation Theology, and the certain knowledge that God is alive and still dealing with human history. The social gospel was, more than anyone could imagine, a marriage between Calvinism and the Left, and a more unlikely marriage could not have been imagined for its time. In Catholicism, a similar experience might be the worker-priests of France and the Catholic theologians who have written on political as well as religious topics whom Harrington mentions on page 168.

STAGE 5. Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Harrington moves at this point to "God's Christian Burial" and to the recognition of the power of myth in the collective consciousness (which Jung had pointed out earlier). Tillich once said that once myths are opened and understood they become "broken myths." We can see what it is they symbolize and are aware of the reason for their power in our lives. Bultmann's "demythologizing," in a sense, open the myths in our religions to scrutiny. Nevertheless, myths are powerful in the individual and in the society. Myths were being

broken and the universality of their meanings was being brought home to very ordinary people through the work of popular theologians. Bultmann was probably very right in facing the utility of Christianity when he said, "Christian mythology conceals rather than conveys the message that man is prey to an in-authentic existence, that Jesus summons him to a decision, by which he can face up to his being as that of one who is going to die and so begin to live authentically." (P.165) Tillich stated that religion remained "the meaning-giving substance of culture and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself." (P166) When we begin to look at the utility of our forms, myths, and beliefs, we do not necessarily destroy them.

Quite possibly in understanding how they function in our lives, we give them new utility and move even further up the moral ladder, away from the God who controls to a religion which illuminates how God functions in our lives, as apparently Harrington is trying to do now. Concurrent with utility is social contract: the sense of obligation to others to make and abide by systems which are concerned for the welfare of all people and which recognizes all people's rights and protects them. Concomitant with this is a feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, with a concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Tillich continued, "Religion...is being ultimately concerned about that which should be our ultimate concern and God is the name for the content of that concern." Therefore, religion "is at home everywhere, namely in the depths of all functions of one's spiritual life. Religion is the dimension of depth in all of them...that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in one's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern." Is it possible that rather than being dead, God has moved us to a

higher level of concern, where we truly question what the utility of God has been in our society, come to grips with it, and disengage God from it, so that the society and God can come into their own spheres. God, to be sure, must be awfully tired of being used to keep the masses quiet, in their places, and obedient, when God truly is crying out for justice for the poor and oppressed.

LEVEL 6: Universal Ethical Principles

The sixth and highest moral level, is the recognition of universal ethical principles. Interestingly, Harrington hits upon what might signal a truth emerging: He says "I do think there is an enormous -- and distinctive-- contribution which a revived religion can make in its political united front with atheistic humanism. That explains the paradox that the decline in religious commitment, as conventionally measured by a drop in church attendance, a relaxation of doctrinal rigor and the like, might actually signal a deepening of religion...But, as many of the participants in the Catholic transformations of the past two decades stated explicitly, it is now possible that churches can become more sect-like in the good sense of the term: more serious and radical about their faith. If that were to happen, then churches sparsely filled with truly devout people might be a sign of religious growth more significant than the packed houses of worship during the 1950s. That would mean that the religious commitment to the consensus ideology I am trying to evoke here could become all the more profound."

Harrington discusses law, and states that the first principle of the new consensus is: No law is binding unless the people have an effective participation in its formulation. In Man's World, Woman's Place, Elizabeth Janeway points out that unless people are willing to obey laws they do not

exist. Unless people are willing to follow leaders, the leaders might as well not exist. The power of the weak is the power always to leave. And the enormous refugee problem in the world today points up the truth of those statements. Universally, people are unwilling to obey unjust laws, to live in antihuman nations, and to follow leaders who lead them nowhere. Harrington goes on to point out that communitarianism is an essential component of the new transcendental, along with a moral motivation based on solidarity. All of these point to the truths of level 6, which is characterized by "following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle."

To me, Harrington has not proven the death of God, merely that humanity is attempting to reach higher moral levels than those occupied by the God of his first chapter. That is not a turning away from God, but a turning toward God. In each of his chapters, Harrington portrays the social situation, the philosophical ideas, and the cultural boundaries within which people experience faith. To some, the glass is half empty. To others, it is half full. But what seems to me to be happening is that society as a whole is moving beyond the early stages of morality to a more universalistic moral sense. Without the idea of the holy (Rudolph Otto) without God, it is possible to do that through atheistic humanism, but how much easier for people to do it with the conception that God still has a hand in history and is still alive and well and working in each of us. Pogo in the 60's, devoted the pre-Christmas daily cartoon to a creature high on a mountain who was endlessly carving letters, but one could not see any one of them in entirety, until finally on Christmas Sunday, the full message was revealed, "God is not dead, he is merely unemployed."

A personal point is brought to mind in an article in Edward Fiske's, The Contemporary Religious Experience, a small book dealing with the "Death of God" theology. Fiske points out that it may be a time to rename God, and suggests that El Elyon, Elohim, El Shaddai, and of course, Yahweh have all been Old Testament names for the experience of God. If we would think of Tillich's concept of "broken myths" we might come to the realization that Yahweh in the "Death of God" movement is a broken myth. Yahweh is the God who is dead. But there are other scriptural names and identities of God, and certainly even Jesus, on the cross, recognized one of them when he cried, not for Yahweh, the militaristic, tribal-national God, whom Harrington has described and whom others have declared dead, but cried out for "Eloi," the singular of Elohim. The Els were local Gods, each on their own hill to whom people went up, as we liturgically do when we repeat, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." El Shaddai, the breasted one, is an example of a possibility. El Shaddai is the God who nurtures us at the breast, the all-sufficient, all-nourishing God. What an amazing turn-around could happen if El Shaddai replaced Jahweh. We would have a return to the mothering (not fathering) God, the nurturant, the erotic, the hedonistic, and ally it with the spiritual, thus beating down the old dualism as well. Now that would be a faith that would be hard to go to war with, or to get nationalistic about without being ridiculously close to the love-ins of the 60's, but a delightful thought nonetheless.

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Following rules only when it is to someone's immediate interest; acting to meet one's own interest and needs and letting others do the same. Right is what's fair, what's an equal exchange, a deal, an agreement.

3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships and Interpersonal Conformity

Living up to what is expected by people close to you or what people generally expect of people in your role as son/daughter, brother/sister, friend, etc.

THE POLITICAL AT A GLANCE

"God is dead! I have lived religion without God," wrote to me to be
Harrington's first, and perhaps that seems like a grand cop out. Harrington
wrote all the characters of liberal faith without any belief, attitude to accept
any. He wrote "Mr. Harrington's religion," and a kind of wary view of the
dominion of and without God. In a way, I feel like I need to read Harrington
the business card of the pastor of the local Unitarian-Universalist Church and
suggest that they sit down for a good, long talk. Maybe they have something to
offer each other.

As I read the political at God's funeral, after having read the book's book,
another book of the book's (with the book) kept coming to mind, and some of
the structure for this paper will be drawn from that book. It's hard, hard to
study of moral development, seems to provide a key for what Harrington is
talking about. I've read Fowler's description of Lawrence Kohlberg and Carol Gilligan's
the stages of moral development (based, by the way, on the work of Jean Piaget
in logical and cognitive development); stages which are sequential,
theological, universal and individual. These are characteristic stages are:

To avoid having rules packed by
punishment, obedience for its own sake,
and avoiding physical damage to persons
and property.

Following rules only when it is to
achieve one's immediate interest, and
most one's own interest and needs and
feeling others to the same. At this
stage, what's an equal exchange,
a deal, an agreement.

I think to be what is expected by people
close to you or what people generally
expect of people in your role as son,
daughter, brother/sister, friend, etc.

1. Postconventional Morality -

2. Individualism, Instrumental
Purpose and Exchange

3. Social Interactional Stage -
relationships, relationships and
relationships, relationships

3.

3. (continued)

"Being good" is important and means having good motives, showing concern about others. It also means keeping mutual relationships, such as trust, loyalty, respect and gratitude.

4. Social System and Conscience

Fulfilling the actual duties to which you have agreed. Laws are to be upheld except in extreme cases where they conflict with other fixed social duties. Right is also contributing to society, the group, or institution.

5. Social Contract or Utility

Being aware that people hold a variety of values and opinions, that most values and rules are relative to your group. These relative rules should usually be upheld, however, in the interest of impartiality and because they are the social contract. Some nonrelative values and rights like life and liberty, however, must be upheld in any society and regardless of majority opinion.

6. Universal Ethical Principles

Following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles one acts in accordance with the principle. Principles are universal principles of justice: the equality of human rights and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.

Given this framework, how does the death of the societal God which Harrington delineates fit into this framework?

Harrington defines the God who is dead or dying as the God who has been used politically for the following:

1. the legitimization of established power and sometimes revolt against it;
2. the transcendent symbol of the common consciousness of an existing community;
3. the foundation of all other values;
4. the organizing principle of a system of the authoritative allocation of social roles (the God of Western feudalism) or the motivating and ethical principle of a system of individual mobility (the God of Western capitalism);
5. The guarantor of personal, ethnic, and national identity;
6. A philosopher for the non-philosophers, including the illiterate. (p 7)

If one looks carefully at Kohlberg's stages, as they are delineated by Keen and Fowler, an interesting layering out occurs with the historical claims to the death of God.

STAGE I. Heteronomous Morality.

Beginning with a description of the feudal world which existed, rigid, parochial, and hierarchical, Harrington quotes Aquinas, "As God created the world, and placed everything in its proper place and brought forth such order that the world appears as a harmonious whole, so to must the founders of states assign each member his proper place, and so order things that an organic, unified state articulated in itself emerges." (p.109) Under feudalism work was authoritatively allocated to individuals and classes, each group was confined to its traditional way of working and rewarded on a scale determined by the community, private property was conditioned on the performance of social function, there was no market in land and the serf was tied, once and for all, to one occupation. (p. 110)

Harrington begins with the Industrial Revolution and the Enlightenment and describes it as a cause of a revolution which occurred predating the Industrial Revolution. It was for Harrington, social (the emergence of a class of "free" laborers and of a bourgeoisie), cultural (the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution of which it was a part), economic in a nontechnical sense (the social organization in a traditional technology), and technological (the Industrial Revolution).³ The philosophical master of the time, to Harrington, was Kant, and he describes Kant's effect upon the times. He says, "Humans were now creating reality for themselves instead of accepting it as a given from God, and the laws within the mind were being imposed upon the external world."⁽¹⁴⁾ Further, to quote Harrington again, "Kant rigorously and profoundly theorized a commonplace

(p. 18)

of the modern age: the war between "is" and "ought". Science, he felt, was transforming reality and the realm of values. Kant posits three bases for morality in the world; God, immortality and freedom. The rise of "science" was forcing God out of business, and the search was on for a substitute deity to take over the social functions of the dying God of tradition. The God Kant suggested was History. History describes Man (to use Kant's word) as "an animal which, when it lives within its own species needs a master." ^(p. 19) Kant states that the very idea of moral responsibility has become problematic. We feel moral responsibility. But experience is the part of that world of appearances which humans can only conceptualize through deterministic laws, and these can hardly prove that we are free -- that is, that we act independently of external laws -- and freedom "is only an idea whose reality is dubious." ^(p. 20) Science and History, if I understand Kant correctly, have placed humanity at the point where outside forces are no longer enough to make us moral; God, the God which has kept society from destroying itself, no longer exists, and only Science and History can, through our desire for immortality presumably, make us good.

...even if they do not make men ethically better, do make them more cultured, conquer the sensual drives and thereby prepare men for a domination in which reason alone shall have power. While the evil which afflicts us, in part because of nature and in part because of man's incessant egotism, is still there, at the same time the powers of the soul rise up, increase and become stronger, so as not to be subordinated to those natural drives and allow us to feel equal to the higher ends which lie hidden within us. ⁽²³⁾

Based on Kohlberg's levels of morality, what Kant essentially is saying is that humanity is ready for a new level of morality. The first level, the level at which humanity was in thrall to kings and princes, to nobles who had power over them, and who exacted obedience in direct response to the amount of punishment ("Off with their heads!") effected, was at an end with the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the Enlightenment, and with the techno-

logical rise of Science and its sister muse History. Humanity no longer was at the base level of morality where it "avoided breaking rules backed by punishment, was obedient for its own sake, and was merely avoiding physical damage to persons and property" as a proper level of civilization. God, who had kept all in order through the hierarchical "divine right of Kings," was no longer able to do so in this manner. "Religion was a despicable means of duping the mob into accepting irrational tyrannies, and a necessary means of keeping people content under rational, benevolent authority." Religion, to Napoleon, for example, makes tolerable the intolerable. (p.25) Unfortunately, the Enlightenment did not go far enough. Its problem was, and I quote Harrington, "was a genuine appeal to universal values but committed to a particular, class-dominated social order;...it was apologetic, ideological, because it also despised the mob and looked for consoling myths with which to keep it quiet... but ... the people turned out to be much more intelligent than...suspected. This led to a crisis of the legitimacy of the established authority. (p.30) God, decided Kant, was dead. The masses, however, were ready for a new step up the ladder of morality.

STAGE 2. Individualism, Instrumental Purpose and Exchange

One would not have to go far to look for a better definition of Capitalism than the above definition of the second stage of moral development.

"With the rise of capitalism, the traditional society which was both cause and effect of the Judeo-Christian God began to disintegrate. "External security and movement," Karl Marx wrote, "distinguish the bourgeois epoch from all previous periods of history. The holy shudder of pious ecstasy...had been drowned in the ice-cold water of egotistical calculation...All fixed and deeply rooted relations, with their venerable images and world views, were dissolved." (p.58)

Hegel is the master philosopher of the early capitalist era, and we have Harrington's word for Hegel.

"He was a German, living in the 'anarchy' of a fragmented, largely fictional, empire: he experienced the capitalist division of labor, with its degradation of the work process, vicariously...but it made a deep impression on him even in economically backward Germany; and he saw, and feared, the rise of a new social strata, a 'mob' without a sense of its own proper place and dignity." (p.59)

Hegel was looking for a religion which would appeal to the heart as well as to the head, and rejected Luther as having abolished Catholic authoritarianism only to replace it with his own ideological authoritarianism. Hegel believed that religion was political. "The popular feasts of the Greeks were all religious feasts to honor either a god or a man who had served the state well and therefore became godly...Religion is the place where the people defines itself...From this point of view religion is the closest of relationships with the state." And Capitalism and the State, with the help of John Calvin, became partners and made a deal, in the best tradition of level 2, where the workers would work and the barons would profit. Hegel, unfortunately, based much of what he wrote on the idea that ancient Greece and Rome was a place where there was no split between freedom and authority, subjective and objective, and the "free republican" of ancient Greece or Rome was so at one with his society that he gave his life without question. Hegel, says Harrington, was either excessively pragmatic or excessively utopian. Ultimately, he defined religion ... as the faith of capitalist society. It is the glory of Protestantism...that it honors marriage rather than celibacy, work as against charity, rational obedience as against blind obedience. Hegel, who does not accept bourgeois society, has a bourgeois Christian ideal. (P74)

Appearing in opposition to Hegel is Karl Marx, who states on the topic of the death of God, "Create a society which will not feel lonely without God, and

then God will disappear." He does not want to deny God, as in an atheist society, but ^{Sees} seen the coming of communism in which the whole question of God will not exist, and even atheism will not make sense. Capitalism was a secularized version of Christianity. The democratic state, where everyone is theoretically equal, is its heaven; the economy, where there is enormous inequality, is its vale of tears. Where the people once looked to the Church for salvation, now they look to the state.

Marx and Hegel, Harrington points out, agreed that religion was the expression of community and God is dying because community is being torn apart by the reality of capitalist society. But the heir is not the heroic, this worldly consciousness of Marx's communism but the this-worldly consciousness of a hedonistic capitalism which wallows in an eternal spiritless present. And Harrington states that it is part of the price being paid for the failure of that socialist transformation Marx sought. (p. 82)

Max Weber probably delineated most clearly the marriage between Calvinism and capitalism. Weber documented the fact that early capitalism was, in part, rationalized by theologians. A society of competition (but rigidly structured competition) and rationally ordered work was replacing a system based on fear of God, now God was concerned not with keeping humanity in its place, but in humanity's "sinfulness" and the new laws are those intended to place limits on the new egotistical forces. What is not explicitly forbidden is permitted and the foundation was laid for a liberal, bourgeois ethic in which atomistic individuals are allowed to follow their own interests so long as they do not interfere with the corresponding freedom enjoyed by everyone else. (p. 112)

The Calvinistic notion of work as a "calling" was a solution to the problem of people having to work harder without the support of community and traditional

institutions. Weber says "There is now a senseless inversion of what is natural... the pursuit of money and only money, the strictest avoidance of all unaffected enjoyment, the denial of hedonistic or happiness-oriented perspectives, where money must be thought of as an end in itself, irrationally transcending the "happiness" and "utility" of the individual." The Calvinists rejected the erotic, theater, and idle talk. They were purposive ascetics in the world, contemptuous of worldly goods and remarkably successful in obtaining them, who put themselves to the task of creating the "New Jerusalem" in the New World. Unfortunately, or possibly fortunately, this religious value decayed and all that remained of it, to Harrington, was the dedication to systematic and scientific means, but the end -- the glory of God -- had disappeared and Weber looked for a new Messiah to save civilization from a calculated and rationalized destiny. (P118-119)

What Weber (and Marx) did not expect, or even dream as a possibility, was the enormous effect the new messiah would have on the world, and how ridiculous it seems now to realize that the messiah who came to save us from the work ethic and restore the erotic to our lives was Freud.

STAGE 3. Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Interpersonal Conformity

Freud, Harrington states, attempted to develop a scientific and secular theory to explain, among many other things, the persistence of the diabolic in the modern world. What he was searching for was a means to probe the dark underworld of the human consciousness (P.144) and wanted to free society from its religious obsession (i.e. Calvinism). There is, said Freud, in men and women "an inborn tendency to negligence, irregularity, and untrustworthiness in their work...Civilization had to put that down with the aid of religion." Freud taught us to look at the repressed in ourselves and in our society, and to draw

from that an understanding of the things which have power in our lives. While Harrington goes on to discover through Freud the repressions which led to the rise of Naziism, what Freud did for society was far more reaching and taught us in many ways to look to ourselves to meet our own needs, to look to our relationships with others (particularly our struggles with our parents) for a sense of our reality, and to look at the Ego, the Id, and especially our Superego for the source of our interpersonal conformity. While Harrington does not discuss Freud any further than to look at where Freud stood in relationship to anthropology, that he injects him at this point is very important, because actually what did in Calvinism was Freudianism and its insistence that Calvinism stood for the struggle between the male and his father and the representation of God was indeed based on the Calvinistic father. While Harrington's economic and social theories are heady stuff, he neglects the enormous influence Freud had on bringing back to human life the hedonistic, the sexual, the erotic, and the personal. Humanity moved on² more step up the moral ladder in finding that all things were relative and through Freud, we probably owe Fletcher's situation ethics and many other modern religious thought systems. 7

STAGE 4. Social System and Conscience

Harrington, at this point in his book, merely touches upon one of the turning points of modern American religion, the "social gospel," but does still make the point that as humanity moved through the halls of history and philosophy, moral development went right along with it. So, Harrington says, through Karl Barth, "Perhaps strikes, general strikes, and street fights would be necessary -- although no Christian should ever exalt them...One was social democratic, but not for the social gospel." Unfortunately for Barth, many others were, and the social gospel brought about a relevance between the

Christianity of the churches and the needs of the masses in the streets. Charities began to appear, the institutional church became very different in the pre and post-World War I era than Christianity had been ever before or would be after that -- although many of the good works begun then have continued and new ones have appeared as the need arose. The politics, economics and social structure of the age leave their mark upon its theologies. Barth -- and Reinhold Niebuhr in the United States -- were Leftists. There were -- there are -- fundamentalists who see Christ as a hunted rebel and those who see him as an absolute monarch, and the social gospel and reaction to it were hallmarks of a time, which, I think, Harrington ignores because it would in fact, prove that God is still alive. Out of the social gospel and the churches which supported it came, I believe, the thrust and support of Liberation Theology, and the certain knowledge that God is alive and still dealing with human history. The social gospel was, more than anyone could imagine, a marriage between Calvinism and the Left, and a more unlikely marriage could not have been imagined for its time. In Catholicism, a similar experience might be the worker-priests of France and the Catholic theologians who have written on political as well as religious topics whom Harrington mentions on page 168.

STAGE 5. Social Contract or Utility and Individual Rights

Harrington moves at this point to "God's Christian Burial" and to the recognition of the power of myth in the collective consciousness (which Jung had pointed out earlier). Tillich once said that once myths are opened and understood they become "broken myths." We can see what it is they symbolize and are aware of the reason for their power in our lives. Bultmann's "demythologizing," in a sense, open the myths in our religions to scrutiny. Nevertheless, myths are powerful in the individual and in the society. Myths were being broken and the universality of their meanings was being brought home to very

ordinary people through the work of popular theologians. Bultmann was probably very right in facing the utility of Christianity when he said, "Christian mythology conceals rather than conveys the message that man is prey to an in-authentic existence, that Jesus summons him to a decision, by which he can face up to his being as that of one who is going to die and so begin to live authentically." (P.165) Tillich stated that religion remained "the meaning-giving substance of culture and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself." (P166) When we begin to look at the utility of our forms, myths, and beliefs, we do not necessarily destroy them. Quite possibly in understanding how they function in our lives, we give them new utility and move even further up the moral ladder, away from the God who controls to a religion which illuminates how God functions in our lives, as apparently Harrington is trying to do now. Concurrent with utility is social contract: the sense of obligation to others to make and abide by systems which are concerned for the welfare of all people and which recognizes all people's rights and protects them. Concomitant with this is a feeling of contractual commitment, freely entered upon, with a concern that laws and duties be based on rational calculation of the greatest good for the greatest number of people. Tillich continued, "Religion...is being ultimately concerned about that which should be our ultimate concern and God is the name for the content of that concern." Therefore, religion "is at home everywhere, namely in the depths of all functions of one's spiritual life. Religion is the dimension of depth in all of them...that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in one's spiritual life. Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern." Is it possible that rather than being dead, God has moved us to a higher level of concern, where we truly question what the utility of God has been in our society, come to grips with it, and disengage God from it, so that

the society and God can come into their own spheres. God, to be sure, must be awfully tired of being used to keep the masses quiet, in their places, and obedient, when God truly is crying out for justice for the poor and oppressed.

LEVEL 6: Universal Ethical Principles

The sixth and highest moral level, is the recognition of universal ethical principles. Interestingly, Harrington hits upon what might signal a truth emerging: He says "I do think there is an enormous -- and distinctive-- contribution which a revivified religion can make in its political united front with atheistic humanism. That explains the paradox that the decline in religious comitment, as conventially measured by a drop in church attendance, a relaxation of doctrinal rigor and the like, might actually signal a deepening of religion...But, as many of the participans in the Catholic transformations of the past two decades stated explicitly, it is now possible that churches can become more sect-like in the good sense of the term: more serious and radical about their faith. If that were to happen, then churches sparsely filled with truly devout people might be a sign of religious growth more significant than the packed houses of worship during the 1950s. That woul mean that the religious commitment to the consensus ideology I am trying to evoke here could become all the more profound."

Harrington discusses law, and states that the first principle of the new consensus is: No law is binding unless the people have an effective participation in its ^uformalation. In Man's World, Woman's Place, Elizabeth Janeway points out that unless people are willing to obey laws they do not M.D. exist. Unless people are willing to follow leaders, the leaders might as well not exist. The power of the weak is the power always.

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enormous refugee problem in the world today points up the truth of those statements. Universally, people are unwilling to obey unjust laws, to live in antihuman nations, and to follow leaders who lead them nowhere. Harrington goes on to point out that communitarianism is an essential ^ocomplement of the new transcendental, along with a moral motivation based on solidarity. All of these point to the truths of level 6, which is characterized by "following self-chosen ethical principles. Particular laws or social agreements are usually valid because they rest on such principles. When laws violate these principles, one acts in accordance with the principle."

To me, Harrington has not proven the death of God, merely that humanity is attempting to reach higher moral levels than those occupied by the God of his first chapter. That is not a turning away from God, but a turning toward God. In each of his chapters, Harrington portrays the social situation, the philosophical ideas, and the cultural boundaries within which people experience faith. To some, the glass is half empty. To others, it is half full. But what seems to me to be happening is that society as a whole is moving beyond the early stages of morality to a more universalistic moral sense. Without the idea of the holy (Rudolph Otto) without God, it is possible to do that through atheistic humanism, but how much easier for people to do it with the conception that God still has a hand in history and is still alive and well and working in each of us. Pogo in the 60's, devoted the pre-Christmas daily cartoon to a creature high on a mountain who was ^denlessly carving letters, but one could not see any one of them in entirety, until finally on Christmas Sunday, the full message was revealed, "God is not dead, he is merely unemployed." M.D.

A personal point is brought to mind in an article in Edward Fiske's, The
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...the world today...
...people are willing to obey...
...and to follow leaders who lead them...
...on the point that...
...transcendental...
...point to the truth of...
...ethical principles...
...because they rest on such principles...
...acts in accordance with the principles."

To me, Harrington has not proven the death of God, merely that humanity is
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of the holy (Harrington calls) without God, it is possible to do that through
ethical demands, but how much easier for people to do it with the inspiration
that God still has a hand in history and is still alive and well and waiting to
each of us. For in the 60's, devoted the pre-Christian daily routine to a
certain high as a mountain who was clearly earthly feelings, but who could not
see any one of them in history, until finally on Christmas Sunday, the light
was again revealed, "God is not dead, he is merely unemployed."

A personal point is brought to mind in the words of the
Small World of the West

Contemporary Religious Experience. Fiske points out that it may be a time to rename God, and suggests that El Elyon, Elohim, El Shaddai, and of course, Yahweh have all been Old Testament names for the experience of God. If we would think of Tillich's concept of "broken myths" we might come to the realization that Yahweh in the "Death of God" movement is a broken myth. Yahweh is the God who is dead. But there are other scriptural names and identities of God, and certainly even Jesus, on the cross, recognized one of them when he cried, not for Yahweh, the militaristic, tribal-national God, whom Harrington has described and whom others have declared dead, but cried out for "Eloi," the singular of Elohim. The Els were local Gods, each on their own hill to whom people went up, as we liturgically do when we repeat, "I will lift up my eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." El Shaddai, the breasted one, is an example of an possibility. El Shaddai is the God who nurtures us at the breast, the all-sufficient, all-nourishing God. What an amazing turn-around could happen if El Shaddai replaced Jahweh. We would have a return to the mothering (not fathering) God, the nurturant, the erotic, the hedonistic, and ally it with the spiritual thus beating down the old dualism as well. Now that would be a faith that would be hard to go to war with, or to get nationalistic about without being ridiculously close to the love-ins of the 60's, but a delightful thought nonetheless.

M.D.

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General Jewish Religious Experience. It is pointed out that it may be a little

terrible God, and suggests that El Elyon, Elchiel, El Ezer, and of course,

Yahweh have all been Old Testament names for the experience of God. If we would

think of Elchiel's concept of "divine myth," we might come to the realization

that Yahweh in the "Death of God" movement is a Jewish myth. Yahweh is the God

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for Yahweh, the universal God, whom Haskings has described

and whom others have declared dead, but cried out for "Eli," the singular of

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being obviously close to the love of the God's, but a Christian thought

nonetheless.

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